

# WHAT IS XERISCAPE?

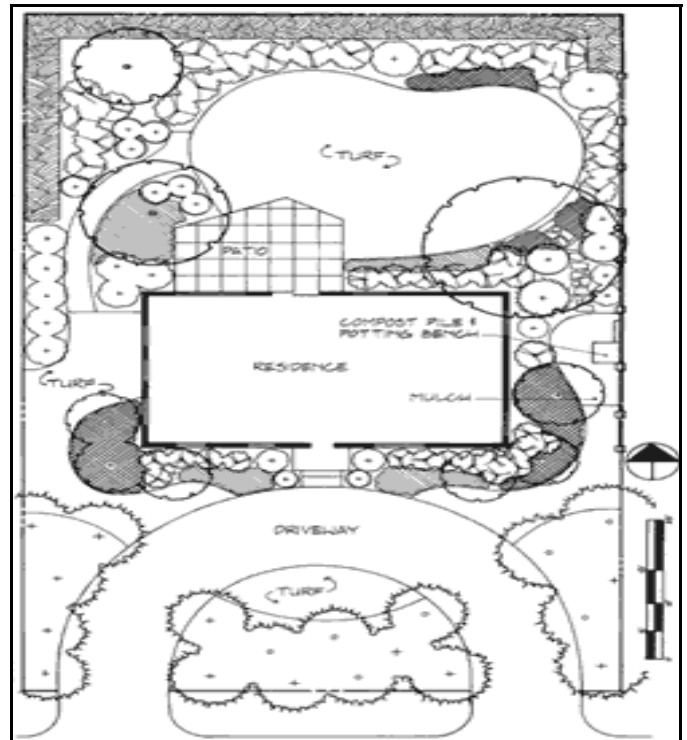
Xeriscaping is an approach to landscaping that uses small amounts of water while still maintaining a traditional look. Literally, the word xeriscaping comes from a combination of two other words: "xeri-" derived from the Greek word "xeros" for dry; and "-scape", meaning a kind of view or scene. While xeriscape translates to mean "dry scene", in practice xeriscaping means simply landscaping with slow growing, drought tolerant plants to conserve water and reduce yard waste. Xeriscapes generally require less fertilizer and pest control measures than traditional landscapes. Because pesticides and fertilizers can inadvertently harm beneficial organisms, as well as impact air and water quality, reducing their use is a good idea.

## WHY XERISCAPE?

Water is a valuable resource that supports life, recreation, the economy and the environment. As gardeners, we need to be aware that our current high water requirement landscapes add to an already high summer water peak. Irrigation needs can be reduced considerably by careful planning and zoning within gardens and landscape areas according to proposed use and plant water requirements. Xeriscape landscaping can provide color, interest, beauty and seasonal change comparable to current high water use landscapes.

Xeriscape landscape is **not** gravel, boulders and wagon wheels. Xeriscaping:

- Conserves water.
- Provides lots of attractive planting options.
- Presents minimal pest and disease problems.
- Thrives with little fertilization.
- Requires low pruning and maintenance.
- Saves valuable landfill space.

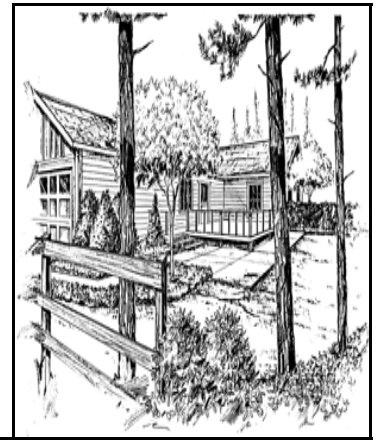
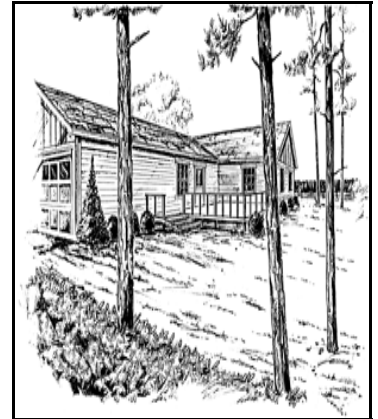


## SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF XERISCAPE

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|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Planning and design  | 5. Appropriate maintenance     |
| 2. Practical turf areas | 6. Appropriate plant selection |
| 3. Efficient irrigation | 7. Use of mulches              |
| 4. Soil analysis        |                                |

## ABOUT THE 7 PRINCIPLES OF XERISCAPING

- 1. Planning and Design:** Create a plan to consider land use, air circulation, sun and wind exposure and the existing vegetation.
- 2. Practical Turf Areas:** Limit the turf grass to useable areas and design for efficient irrigation.
- 3. Efficient Irrigation:** Water early in the day and deep water the area rather than sprinkle. Water plants as required for their needs.
- 4. Soil Analysis:** Have your soil analyzed and add soil amendments as required. Use sand to increase drainage and peat moss, manure or compost to improve moisture retention. Fertilize carefully for strong root growth.
- 5. Appropriate Maintenance:** Check that plants are adequately watered and perform weed control (especially during establishment). Prune to remove dead and diseased growth while enhancing the natural shape.
- 6. Appropriate Plant Selection:** The majority of plant material should be drought tolerant. Use plants that are adapted to your zone. Medicine Hat is in zone 2.
- 7. Use of Mulches:** Will reduce weed growth and retain soil moisture while moderating soil temperature. Ensure a consistent 50 mm (2 inches) layer of mulch surrounds the plants.



Medicine Hat is the sunniest city in Canada, according to Environment Canada, receiving 2,512 hours of sunshine per year.



Medicine Hat receives approximately 230 mm (8.7 inches) of rain per year.



Plants are necessary for:  
- an attractive community  
- enjoyment and comfort  
- shade and cooling  
- improving air quality



In Medicine Hat the average person uses 210 liters (47 gal.) of water per day in winter and 860 liters (190 gal.) per day in summer.

